Stewardship as Leadership

An Empirical Investigation

This article examines the factors that stymie contemporary leaders in their quest to practicalize the concepts of stewardship as an alternative form of leadership. Stewardship is herein argued to be a more viable form of leadership than current leadership concepts, and nine dimensions have been identified as personifications of the stewardship concept. The results show that stewardship, as a leadership alternative, has not yet begun to supplant traditional forms of leadership.

The concept of leadership and the promises – and failures – that it has held for humankind over the centuries is a well-researched area. Burns (1978) asserts that leadership is one of the most observed, but the least understood phenomena. Goodwin (1998) asserts that there are as many different leadership styles as there are leaders. Consequently, the theories of leadership are many and they originate from diverse sources. Various leadership theorists, in defense of their leadership models, have suggested various definitions of leadership. Burns (1978: 43-44) asserts that: “The essence of leadership in any polity is the recognition of real need, the uncovering and exploiting of contradictions among values and between values and practice, the realigning of values, the reorganization of institutions where necessary, and the governance of change.” Bennis and Nanus (1985: 225) describe leaders as individuals who “lead by pulling rather than by pushing, by inspiring rather than by ordering, by creating challenging, but achievable, expectations and rewarding progress towards them rather than by manipulating, and by enabling people to use their own initiatives and experiences rather than by denying or constraining their experiences and actions.”

The theories and models of leadership that have been mentioned supra have in common their focus on the leader as a pedestal personality who is separate from the people being led. However, as Zaleznik (1996: 2) points out: “Leadership is not restricted to the occupants of formal positions.” Therefore, we must begin to
refocus our leadership lenses to recognize not only the appointed leaders but also their followers and the nature of the relationship that exists between the two groups.

April, MacDonald, and Vriesendorp (2000) submit that an alternative leadership idea, which boosts personal growth and reciprocal care through teamwork, total involvement, and a strong sense of ethics, is supplanting traditional and hierarchical leadership principles. Spears (2002: 2) asserts: “In these early years of the 21st century, we are beginning to see that traditional, autocratic, and hierarchical modes of leadership are yielding to a newer model that is based on teamwork and community, one that seeks to involve others in decision-making, one strongly based in ethical and caring behavior, and one that is attempting to enhance the personal growth of workers while improving the caring and quality of our many institutions.” This new wind of change, which has gathered tremendous momentum on the leadership landscape over the last four decades, is the concept of stewardship. Admittedly, stewardship is a hoary concept, the antecedents of which are replete throughout the Christian Bible (Matthew 25:15-30; Matthew 10:8; Genesis 2:15-20; Luke 16; Mark 12:41-44). As a form and alternative to traditional leadership understanding, however, the idea (in business) owes its origin to Robert Greenleaf who first envisioned, in 1970, the potentially beneficent concept of the leader as a servant, which he termed servant-leadership. Since Greenleaf laid the premise for stewardship as an alternative form of leadership, several other prominent theorists (Covey, 1989; Autry, 1992; Depree, 1992) have written about, and buttressed, the concept from different perspectives. Macnamara (2004) perhaps best captures the crux of stewardship when he describes it as passing the present on to future generations in as good a shape as, or better than, when it was received. This concept is the most viable alternative to current leadership.

However diverse the sources of competing leadership models and theories are, there is a common denominator that connects them all. They all seem to be focused primarily on the underlying the need for, and the qualities of, good leadership. These authors (Kotter, 1996; Kouzes and Posner, 1987; Rost, 1993) are all basically saying that leadership is an indispensable factor of any institution and they all seem to be in agreement as to the qualities that leaders must have in order to have a viable organization. The same is true for the writers who propound stewardship as an alternative to leadership (Spears, 1998; Macnamara, 2004; Block, 1993; Covey, 1989). They have all listed and expounded on the factors that distinguish stewardship from traditional modes of leadership and the factors that make stewardship a more acceptable, indeed more realistic, approach to leadership. The question, then, is why has stewardship not, to any extent, supplanted these traditional modes of leadership in practice? Block (1993: 10) highlights this concern when he states: “What is troubling about ideas like stewardship is that even though they are intuitively appealing, they seem far removed from the heart of the way we run our organizations.” This is an outright admission, from as authoritative a source as you can ever hope for, that stewardship has not begun to substitute for current leadership methods in practice. What are those factors that are inhibiting contemporary leaders from subjugating themselves to the dictates of the stewardship concept?

In order to investigate reasons why stewardship is not as prevalent a concept
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...as it should be with contemporary leaders, this research makes use of a Stewardship Framework first developed by April, Hendrikz and Peters (2010 forthcoming), which proposes nine dimensions around which stewardship revolves.

**The Stewardship Framework**

The nine dimensions of the April Stewardship Framework—(1) Personal Mastery, (2) Personal Vision, (3) Mentoring, (4) Valuing Diversity, (5) Shared Vision, (6) Risk-taking and Experimentation, (7) Vulnerability and Maturity, (8) Delivering Results, and (9) Raising Awareness—represent factors that this research argues are the attributes that an individual must possess in order to be an effective steward of his or her organization, group, or community. Each of the nine is discussed below, providing a basis for its inclusion in the framework.

**1. Personal Mastery**

Senge (1990) describes personal mastery as being about creating what one wants in life and in work. He asserts that personal mastery is based on personal vision and purpose, maintaining a creative balance between vision and reality, minimizing the impact of beliefs that run contrary to personal mastery, commitment to truth, and developing an understanding of the subconscious. Covey (1989) views personal mastery as having the ability to identify objective reality and align one’s subjective values with principles, as this leads to an inward strength of character and genuine caring and serving.

However way it is described by the experts and theorists of leadership concepts, the common thread that runs through all their descriptions is that personal mastery is a personal journey to continually improve one’s ability and continually grow by learning and being willing to supplant old concepts with new and better ones. What then ties personal mastery to stewardship? Throughout much of the literature, stewardship has been touted as a concept whose primary consideration is a focus on the community, the group, or the organization—rather than the individual. Personal mastery, on the other hand, advocates self-development and a continual improvement of one’s personal abilities. Because of this, personal mastery and stewardship seem to be antithetical concepts, two extreme ends of a continuum.

What bridges these two ends of the gamut and align them into one coherent structure is the fact that the concept of stewardship presupposes a social contract between the individual and the community, group, or organization. A further presupposition is that both parties to this social contract bring to the union the best of their personal abilities. Stewardship requires an individual who is the master of his/her game, someone who is confident enough in his/her ability to allow others to achieve self-actualization. Essentially, stewardship is about trust—trust from both the individual and the group—and, unless a person is a master of his/her own abilities, s/he is not going to inspire the trust in others that is necessary to make stewardship a reality.

Giuliani and Kurson (2002) assert that a person’s ability to get people to perform depends largely on what they perceive when they look at, and listen, to him/her. They state that people need to see someone who is human, but is stronger than they are, and such leadership strength is acquired through personal mastery, which is a lifelong journey. This is the link right here. People seek an effective leader, but they need to trust that person enough to bestow upon him/her the mantle of leadership. Trust is – has to be – earned, and the quickest way...
of achieving that is by demonstrating that one is the master of his/her own abilities and that s/he is continually seeking ways to improve these abilities. Senge (1990) uncovered the link between personal mastery and effective leadership – stewardship, for example– when he postulates that the core leadership strategy is to be a role model and commit oneself to one's own personal mastery. Personal mastery, therefore, allows an individual to discover him/herself and master his/her capabilities, which, in turn, stimulates trust in others that allows them to unquestionably follow him/her as an effective leader. Because of the vital role that personal mastery plays in a person's leadership ability, it is, needless to say, indispensable to any form of leadership – stewardship included; hence, its inclusion as one of the fundamental dimensions of stewardship.

2. Personal Vision

Senge (1990) describes vision as what one wants to create for him/herself and the world around him/her. Hickman & Silva (1984: 155) describe it as “a mental journey from the known to the unknown, creating the future from a montage of current facts, hopes, dreams, dangers, and opportunities.” People tend to judge you by what you represent, and what you represent is your personal vision. Therefore, people will judge you by your personal vision. What, therefore, is the link between personal vision and leadership in general and stewardship in particular?

Various leadership theorists (Covey, 1989; Senge, 1990) have underlined the importance of developing a personal vision, emphasizing that it engenders success and inspires others to achieve their dreams. Many theorists (Doz and Prahalad, 1987; Hunt, 1991; Kotter, 1990; Robbins and Duncan, 1988; Sashkin, 1988) describe a definite and indispensable link between personal vision and leadership. Some (Hunt, 1991; Sashkin, 1988) even go as far as characterizing vision as a form of leadership, an assertion which we find a little far-fetched, but which serves to underline the important role that vision plays in a leadership framework. Others (Pearson, 1989; Phillips and Hunt, 1992) describe vision as one of the most critical tasks that a leader has to perform.

The importance, therefore, of having a personal vision in one's quest to be an effective leader cannot be overemphasized. It is simply impossible to lead others when you yourself have no idea where you want to go, or how you want to get there. Effective leaders have a vision of making a difference, of what might be (the possibility), and they believe they can make it happen (Kouzes and Posner, 1984; Zander and Zander, 2000). Covey (1989: 106) asserts that effective people “begin with the end in mind.” In other words, they have a vision at the beginning of a journey about what they expect of the journey at the end. With this mentality, the strategy for implementing the vision is much more practicable. Manasse (1985) asserts that it is through personal vision that leaders identify their own personal resources and position themselves to play to their strengths. Personal vision is a reflection of one's outlook of the community or organization in which s/he lives or operates. This is the connection between personal vision and leadership concepts such as stewardship.

3. Mentoring

Over the last 30 years or so, the concept of mentoring has drawn tremendous attention from a wide range of researchers (Kram, 1980, 1983, 1985; Bova and Phillips, 1982; Hunt and Michael, 1983; Phillips, 1977). Gregson (1994) describes the
mentoring process as an attempt to transfer experience and expertise from experienced individuals in an organization to the less experienced. However, it is described or defined, the inescapable fact is that mentoring is, first of all, a social relationship that exists between two persons that is expected to accrue benefits to either or both parties. The question is: What is the essence of this relationship known as mentoring? What are the benefits that are to be accrued by the parties to the relationship? To answer this question, let us point out that a mentoring relationship involves a mentor and a protégé. A third distinct, but subtle, party to this relationship is the group, organization, or community to which the first two parties belong. The process of mentoring, if properly implemented, creates, according to Scandura, Tejeda, Werther & Lankau (1996: 53), a “three-way reciprocal context where the mentor gives, the protégé gets, and the organization benefits.”

Beginning with the benefits received by the protégé, Kram (1985) provides empirical evidence that the process enhances work effectiveness, and several other researchers (Roche, 1979; Stumpf and London, 1981; Hunt and Michael, 1983; Fagenson, 1989) argue that mentoring engenders success on the job or assigned task. The bottom line is that there are tremendous benefits to be gained by a protégé in a mentoring relationship.

From the perspective of the mentor, it is not entirely a give-give situation as some very subtle benefits also accrue to him/her. The benefit derived by the mentor, according to Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, and McKee (1978) and Kram (1983), is that the mentoring relationship can serve as a source of reinvigoration of the mentor’s career. Levinson et al. (1978: 253) perhaps put it more succinctly when they assert: “The mentor is doing something for himself. He is making productive use of his own knowledge and skills in middle age.”

From the organizational, group, or community perspective, Wilson and Elman (1990) suggest that there are tremendous benefits to be accrued by the parties to the mentoring relationship. The benefit that derives to the organization is corollary to the benefits that accrue to the mentor and the protégé. On the one hand, the organization benefits when the mentoring relationship enhances the protégé’s contribution to the organization (Scandura et al., 1996). Similarly, the rejuvenation in the mentor’s career, as alluded to by Levinson et al. (1978) and Kram (1983) increases his/her overall value and contributions to the organization.

The insinuation of all of this is that a properly structured and well-implemented mentoring relationship is the perfect recipe for the creation of a sustainable, vibrant, and competitive organization. Given that an effective leader is someone who ensures the sustainability of the organization and that mentoring enhances that sustainability, it is obvious why mentoring is one of the paramount skills needed by contemporary leaders. Mentoring is, therefore, inextricably connected to sustainable leadership. Stewardship, as a form of leadership, is a sustainable concept by its very nature of advocating service over self-interest. Mentoring offers a conduit for ensuring the sustainability that stewardship preaches; hence, the inclusion of mentoring as one of the dimensions in the Stewardship Framework.

4. Valuing Diversity

Church (1995: 3) defines diversity as “a collection of individuals who differ from each other on one or any number of dimensions including culture, values, education, gender, marital status and age.” Theorists (Guzzo, 1986; Hoffman, 1979; Hoffman and Maier, 1961; Janis, 1962) argue that diversity engenders creative decision-making characterized by innovative and high-quality solutions. Valuing diversity has been linked to learning by some researchers (Lee, Macdermid and Buck, 2000) and others (April and Shockley, 2007; Illiken and Martin, 1996; Robinson and Dechant, 1997; Thomas and Ely, 1996) have identified it as being crucial to organizational performance. Improperly managed and undervalued diversity can negatively affect how group members are able to identify with one another (Brewer, 1996; Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel and Turner, 1979). Additionally, it has been empirically determined that poorly managed diversity in groups can negatively affect cohesion, as well as hinder performance and communication (Zenger and Lawrence, 1989).

The implication of all this for organizations, groups, and communities is that, depending on their approach, diversity could serve as either a stepping stone or as a hindrance. It, therefore, makes it incumbent upon contemporary leaders to attain a position of being able to value and leverage diversity in their groups or organizations for the good of the organization. Valuing diversity is about building an inclusive community or group in which members are able to put aside their differences, perceived or
Ext Ad 7
5. Shared Vision

If individuals in a group, community, or organization each had their separate vision, or a separate notion of what the shared vision was, they would be reacting against each other and the net result would be that the group, community, or organization would stagnate. Shared vision serves as guidance for members of the organization who need to understand what the organization is and where it intends to go (Nanus, 1992) and it is “a view of a realistic, credible, attractive future for the organization, a condition that is better in some important ways than what now exists” (Bennis & Nanus, 1985: 89).

The implication, therefore, is that an organization’s shared vision has to be one that inspires the members of the organization to actualize and perpetuate it. It has to be right, and it has to be reflective of the collective vision of the members. The important thing is that everyone must be sold on the vision to give it a decent chance of survival or implementation. This is the transformation of personal vision into shared vision, and it is a very indispensable hallmark of any leadership concept. A leader who has a great personal vision, but lacks the ability to recruit disciples in the organization to join the vision bandwagon is not an effective leader. Transforming the vision into reality means “involving the hearts and minds of those who have to execute and deliver, and these are not the people at the top of the organization, but those at the bottom” (Jones, 1998: 65).

Shared vision, like the concept of stewardship, advocates the interest of the group, community, or organization over those of the individual members of the organization. It, like stewardship, promotes collectivity and commonality, and shuns individualism. It puts unity of purpose, oneness of goal, ahead of personal achievements and self-aggrandizement, and so does the concept of stewardship. The parallel, therefore, between the mentality that drives shared vision and that which fuels stewardship is very striking almost to the point of being synonymous. Hence, the inclusion of shared vision as one of the nine dimensions of the Stewardship Framework.

6. Risk-taking and Experimentation

The term ‘Risk-taking and Experimentation’, as it has been used in the Stewardship Framework, refers to the ability to be open to new ideas and ways of doing things and not just being stuck in routine procedures. It also refers to the ability of being able to allow others in the organization the space, freedom, and flexibility to express themselves through their capabilities. Covey (2002: 30-31) claims that: “The greatest gift you can give other people is themselves and you do this when you affirm in people their basic gifts and talents and capacities. When you do that, you show reverence for people, you show humility, you show respect, and you show caring.”

One of the truest marks of an effective leader is the ability to engender trust in the members of the organization and empower the members to operate with flexibility to achieve the goals of the organization. The implication, therefore, is that experimenting with new ideas and allowing others in the organization or community to become more expressive through their contributions promotes a culture of learning. The main ideas to be gleaned here is that a leader who encourages new ideas, and gives others in the organization the space to explore new concepts and ideas, develops a two-prong distinct competitive advantage for the organization – individual empowerment and mutual trust.

Empowerment means encouraging risk-taking, within guidelines, and employees need to feel free to ask questions and risk failure without worrying about appearing to be unintelligent (Coleman, 1996). Contemporary leaders must encourage their followers to take initiative and to act without having been told to do so. This means that leaders have to relinquish some of their control to obtain results. Empowerment is corollary to having a sense of influence and choice (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990) and the empowered person ultimately acts like one who is self-employed, with responsibility for both results and career (Bridges, 1994). This is achieved by giving others the belief that they can make meaningful contributions to the organization (Coffey, Cook and Hunsaker, 1994) because mutual accountability dissipates boundaries and they assume responsibility beyond their job specifications (Connors, Smith and Hickman, 1994).

7. Vulnerability and Maturity

Modern organizations, as has already been alluded to, are increasingly being
characterized by diversity. This means that today’s workplace is a melting pot of different orientations, styles, and experiences. “There is a diverse range of people that we learn from at work, very few of whom are recognized by the employing organization as people with a role in promoting learning – that is, people designated as supervisors or trainers” (Boud and Middleton, 2003: 2001). Therefore, contemporary leaders must strive at all times to maintain a level of maturity and authenticity that allows them to engender an organizational atmosphere that promotes learning in the organization at all levels of the organization. Stewardship, from an organizational perspective, implies teamwork and unity of purpose. It implies an all-for-one one-for-all mentality so that the organization, group, or community is driven forward for the general good of all. However, for this to happen, people in the organization, especially the leaders, have to be open to the concept of learning from the experiences and knowledge of each other. Leaders must be mature enough to actively seek help and counsel from others, unlearn some of their old notions (April, April and Wabbels, 2006) especially if it means crossing traditional hierarchical boundaries or even social categories/castes. In order to be able to respond to changes, constant learning is needed (Tissen, Arndtissen and Deprez, 1998) and learning principles are realized through knowledge sharing with colleagues, clients, and others (Hong and Kuo, 1999).

This level of maturity, the one that allows a person to be humble enough to submit to a learning experience from others in the organization leads to individual empowerment because as you open up yourself to learn from others, they too get an opportunity to learn from you. The end result is that a bond of camaraderie, based on mutual respect and shared purpose, is developed and there is a greater level of trust within the organization as people become more aware of each other’s capabilities. These outcomes—trust, mutual respect, humility, and oneness of purpose—are unique features of the stewardship concept, underlying the importance of maturity and vulnerability to the Stewardship Framework.

8. Delivering Results

The stewardship concept advocates service over self-interest and community over self. In order to practicalize stewardship, therefore, it is very crucial that the leader in the organization is at the forefront of activities, making sure that s/he practices what s/he preaches. The leader has to be seen as being involved personally in seeking to broaden stewardship throughout the organization. The leader must be committed to delivering concrete results so that others in the organization can be led by practical example. Unless contemporary leaders are thoroughly committed to delivering results through their stewardship actions, the concept of stewardship stands no chance of being anything more than a concept/theory. The ability to deliver result is, therefore, the ultimate measurement and determinant of a leader’s commitment to making the organization achieve its goals. Having a personal vision, selling and sharing this vision to others in the organization, being a master of one’s abilities, and engendering a learning – and empowered organization through mentoring, risk-taking, and vulnerability and maturity, would all amount to nothing if these were not directed at achieving concrete results to uplift the organization. Stewardship emphasizes service, but this service has to be directed at achieving results – which includes rewarding people for achieving results through the ‘lens of stewardship’ (so it is not results-at-all-costs, but rather, results-through-stewardship). When the leader is committed to delivering results, others in the organization are also driven towards producing results, and the implication is that the organization is characterized by individuals who are result-focused and united in trying to accomplish the goals of the organization.

Everything else that has been discussed so far about stewardship and the other dimensions of stewardship would be considered meaningless, and without substance, without the ability to transform them into action through the delivery of concrete and measurable results. The ability to deliver results is the ultimate measure of performance. Therefore, delivering results is paramount to the success of any concept, stewardship being no exception.

9. Raising Awareness

‘Raising Awareness’, as it has been used in the Stewardship Framework, relates to one’s ability to champion and herald stewardship and the growth of a sustainable civil society. This dimension of stewardship is similar in importance as the delivering results dimension. Unless a leader can be seen to be actively seeking to promote governance and a
sustainable society, i.e., practicing what s/he preaches, the concept of stewardship is defeated from the very beginning.

As a leadership alternative, stewardship is relatively new and has been around (in business) for only about four decades. However, it was only in the last couple of decades that the concept began to gather momentum as a legitimate form of leadership. Even at that, stewardship has not yet attained a pre-eminent status and is still a long way from doing so. Spears (2002) postulates that the number of practitioners of servant leadership has increased from a trickle to a river on the global scale, but it is not yet a mighty river. Therefore, proponents of the stewardship concept have a responsibility to herald and raise awareness of what the following part of leading, as advocated by stewardship, entails.

Leaders must take an active interest in attracting more disciples to stewardship through active and constant awareness. This has to be achieved by accomplishing organizational results through stewardship behavior, also encouraging, and sometimes demanding, responsible behavior from all stakeholders. People must be made aware of the benefits of ethical behavior and behaving responsibly, as this is one sure way of promoting the sustainable society and organizations that stewardship advocates. It is, therefore, incumbent upon contemporary leaders to sound the trumpet of good corporate governance through constantly raising awareness about a sustainable society, characterized by service to society rather than self-advancement.

Connecting the Dots and Creating the Stewardship Framework
Each of the nine dimensions has been demonstrated to have strong links with at least one of the central themes of stewardship—trust, community outlook, responsible behavior, community building, and inclusive community. On the basis of these, the link between each of the nine dimensions and stewardship is established and their inclusion in the Stewardship Framework is vouched for, which leads to the research hypothesis and the questions based on these dimensions.

Research Hypothesis and Questions
As a precursor to the exploration into the dimensions of stewardship, the hypothesis for this research is as follows:

That, generally, the concept of stewardship as a leadership alternative is not being implemented on a regular and sustained basis by contemporary leaders—that is, stewardship has not substituted traditional forms of leadership in our governments and organizations.

The primary question is:

“Why has stewardship, in all its acknowledged superiority over traditional forms of leadership, not taken a more appreciable role in our lives? Alternatively, what are the stumbling blocks for taking stewardship forward as a legitimate form of leadership and gaining greater acceptance in the mainstream?”

Additionally, the investigation intends to further determine whether specific inhibiting factors, or groups of factors, can be delineated along demographic lines like race, gender, age, profession, geographic location, and level of education. Therefore, the secondary question is:

Can the factors that have prevented stewardship from supplanting traditional forms of leadership be delineated along the following lines?

- Gender
- Age
- Position
- Industry; and
- Nationality.

Addressing the Hypothesis
A cursory glance at the responses that were obtained for all the questions under each of the nine identified dimensions of stewardship, while not conclusive by itself, suggests that the answer to the research hypothesis is in the affirmative. To determine how each respondent scored along individual dimensions, the responses to all of the questions within a particular dimension were averaged, with the average score representing a respondent’s personal assessment for that dimension. Then the averages across all the dimensions were then averaged to determine a respondent’s final result for the entire framework, thereby gauging the respondent’s level of stewardship orientation. The result was that the highest average response for all the respondents was 2.9 (Vulnerability and Maturity) and the lowest responses were 2.0 each (Shared Vision and Delivering Results). The average across all nine dimensions for all the Respondents was 2.4. For the purpose of this research, averages of 1 and 2 have been classified as “low” applications of stewardship concepts; an average of 3 has been classified as a “moderate” application of stewardship concepts; and averages of 4 and 5 have been classified as “high” application of stewardship concepts. To the nearest whole number, therefore, the average response of all Respondents across the nine dimensions was 2, an indication...
of a low application of stewardship concepts by contemporary leaders and a confirmation of the research hypothesis.

In order to determine whether or not the mean responses from the data set could be employed to make an inference about the population mean, a t-test of mean was performed with the following pair of hypotheses:

- $H_0: \mu = 2.5$
- $H_1: \mu < 2.5$

The test was performed at a 95% significance level and the hypothesized mean of 2.5 represents the least mean before a response can be said to be low in stewardship application. The result of the test was a p-value of $0.0028$, a t-statistic of $-2.8139$, and an at-critical value of $1.6557$. The very low p-value, less than $0.05$, provided strong statistical evidence to infer that the alternative hypothesis was true—i.e. to infer that the mean response of the population was less than 2.5, thereby falling into the region of low application of stewardship concepts. This is a further validation of the original research hypothesis that stewardship is not being implemented on a sustained basis by contemporary leaders.

### Addressing the Primary Question

An affirmative answer to the research hypothesis provides a basis for the evaluation of the primary research question. The first step was to test whether or not there were significant differences between the mean responses of all the Respondents across the nine dimensions. To do this, a single factor ANOVA was performed between the mean responses for each dimension with the following pair of hypotheses:

- $H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 = \mu_4 = \mu_5 = \mu_6 = \mu_7 = \mu_8 = \mu_9$
- $H_1: \text{At least two of the means differ}$

The test was performed at a 95% significance level and it derived an F-statistic of $31.6768$, a p-value of $1.28 \times 10^{-9}$, and an F-critical of $1.9456$. In view of the extremely low p-value, there was very compelling statistical evidence to infer that the alternative hypothesis was true and to conclude that there existed significant differences between at least two of the mean responses of the nine dimensions. However, a further interrogation of the data, to determine exactly which set of means differ, would provide directional focus in the quest to answer the primary question.

Therefore, a Tukey and Fisher LSD test with Bonferroni adjustment was performed to pinpoint which sets of means exhibited significant differences. The LSD test results, with alpha ($\alpha$) of 0.05, return a hurdle amount of 0.26 for the Fisher Test with the Bonferroni Adjustment and an omega ($\omega$) of 0.25. This means that for the difference between two sets of means to be considered statistically significant, they must exceed 0.26 by Fisher and Bonferroni’s standard and 0.25 by Tukey’s standard. On the basis of this, it was discovered that out of the 36 relationships that exist between the dimensions, 24 or 67% of these exhibited significant differences.

Seeing that there were many pairs of significant differences between the mean responses for the nine dimensions, it was firmly established that some of the dimensions inhibit contemporary leaders more so than others. The next logical step was to determine the magnitude of each dimension’s effect on contemporary leaders and their ability to practice stewardship in the mainstream.

Starting with the customary cursory inspection of the average response of each dimension, it was clear that at the very best respondents were moderate in their application of stewardship principles in five of the nine dimensions (Personal Vision, Personal Mastery, Vulnerability and Maturity, Risk Taking and Experimentation, and Valuing Diversity) and low in the remaining dimensions. Therefore, an initial ranking of the dimensions, pending a more detailed review of the responses, from least inhibiting to most inhibiting is seen in Exhibit I.

To determine if this initial ranking of the dimensions was the right one, a more detailed inspection of the distribution of responses by the Respondents was performed. The first step (hereinafter referred to as Step 1) towards confirming the above rankings was to rank each dimension on the basis of the number of Respondents that had responded in each category of response, i.e., 1, 2, 3, and 4. Given that there were only two out of 143 instances where the mean was 5, this category was not included so as to not compromise the rankings. The resultant table is shown in Exhibit II.

In the Exhibit II, the orders in the second and third columns were derived based on the number of responses, with a four-fold ranking of the highest number of responses to the lowest as follows:

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<th>Exhibit I: Initial Ranking of Dimensions (Entire Data Set)</th>
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by ranking, in ascending order, the dimensions based on the number of 1's and 2's per dimension. For example, Vulnerability and Maturity, Personal Vision, and Personal Mastery received the least number of 1's, respectively. Therefore, they have been ranked first, second, and third, respectively, as depicted by the second column. On the other hand, Delivering Results, Shared Vision, and Mentoring received the most number of 1's, respectively, leading to their respective rankings of ninth, eighth, and seventh in the same column. In the fourth and fifth columns, the orders were derived by ranking, in descending order, the dimensions based on the number of 3's and 4's per dimension. For example, Personal Mastery, Personal Vision, and Vulnerability and Maturity received the most number of 3's, respectively. Therefore, they have been ranked first, second, and third, respectively, as depicted by the fourth column. Shared Vision, Mentoring, and Delivering Results, on the other hand, received the least percentage of "lows", respectively. Therefore, they have been ranked first, second, and third, respectively, as shown in the second column. On the other hand, Delivering Results, Shared Vision, and Mentoring received the highest percentage of "lows", respectively, leading to their respective rankings of ninth, eighth, and seventh in the same column. In the third and fourth columns, the orders were derived by ranking, in descending order, the dimensions based on the percentage of "moderate" and "high" per dimension. For example, Personal Vision, Vulnerability and Maturity, and Personal Mastery received the highest percentage of "moderate", respectively. Therefore, they have been ranked first, second, and third, respectively, as depicted by the fourth column. Shared Vision, Mentoring, and Delivering Results, on the other hand, received the highest percentage of "moderate," respectively. Therefore, they have been ranked first, second, and third, respectively, in the third column.

In the Exhibit III, the order in the second column was derived by ranking, in ascending order, the dimensions based on the percentage of "lows" per dimension. For example, Personal Mastery, Vulnerability and Maturity, and Personal Vision received the least percentage of "lows", respectively. Therefore, they have been ranked first, second, and third, respectively, as shown in the second column. On the other hand, Delivering Results, Shared Vision, and Mentoring received the highest percentage of "lows", respectively, leading to their respective rankings of ninth, eighth, and seventh in the same column. In the third and fourth columns, the orders were derived by ranking, in descending order, the dimensions based on the percentage of "moderate" and "high" per dimension. For example, Personal Vision, Vulnerability and Maturity, and Personal Mastery received the highest percentage of "moderate," respectively. Therefore, they have been ranked first, second, and third, respectively, in the third column.
received the least percentage of "moderate," respectively, leading to their ninth, eighth, and seventh respective rankings. The average rank column was then derived as was done in Exhibit II. Based on this average ranking across response classification, the dimensions were ranked as indicated in the last column of Exhibit III, which shows Personal Mastery as least inhibiting and Mentoring as most inhibiting.

The third step (hereinafter referred to as Step 3) in order to obtain a final ranking of the dimensions, which would then serve as an indication of the factors that most inhibit the stewards in contemporary leaders – thus answering the primary question, was to find the average of the final rankings of each dimension derived from Steps 1 and 2 in the last columns of Exhibit VII & VIII. Thus, the final ranking of the dimensions for all Respondents, in order of least to most inhibiting, is shown in Exhibit IV.

This final list, more or less, conforms to the original ranking except that Mentoring, rather than Delivering Results, is the factor that most precludes taking stewardship forward as a legitimate alternative to traditional forms of leadership. The pattern that has emerged is that respondents, except for one dimension – Valuing Diversity, were moderate in their application of those dimensions that tend to focus inward on their personal goals and abilities. On the other hand, they were, with one exception – Delivering Results, low in the dimensions that have an outward or community/group focus. The general implication, therefore, is that people are more inhibited by the aspects of stewardship that dictate community building and sharing and are less inhibited by those aspects that dictate self-development.

### Addressing the Secondary Question - the Gender Question

The first gender issue to be addressed was whether or not there were significant differences between the average responses of male and female respondents. In order to make this determination, a single factor ANOVA was performed on the combined mean responses for all nine dimensions for both sexes. The ANOVA was performed at a 95% significance level with the following pair of hypotheses:

- $H_0 : \mu_1 = \mu_2$
- $H_1 : \text{The two means differ}$

From this test, a $p$-value of 0.79, an $F$-stat of $31.6768$, and an $F$-critical of $1.9456$ was obtained. The $p$-value led to the conclusion that there was not enough statistical evidence to infer that the alternative hypothesis was true; hence the null hypothesis was accepted and the conclusion was that there were no differences between male and female respondents’ abilities to practicalize stewardship concepts.

With the initial conclusion that there was no evidence to infer that there were significant differences between male and female responses, the data was further subjected to a stringent examination to determine as much as possible the influence of gender on one’s ability to be a steward. To do this, a chi-squared test was performed at a 95% significance level between gender and the overall mean responses across the nine dimensions. The hypotheses for this test were:

- $H_0 : \text{The two variables are independent}$
- $H_1 : \text{The two variables are dependant}$

The $p$-value from this test was 0.5146 and the chi-squared stat was 2.2894. In view of the high $p$-value, there was no compelling statistical evidence to infer that the alternative hypothesis was true and, therefore, it was concluded that there was no connection between

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Exhibit IV: Final Ranking of Dimensions (Entire Data Set)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ranking</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exhibit V: Final Ranking of Dimensions by Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dimensions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerability and Maturity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Vision</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk Taking &amp; Experimentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valuing Diversity</td>
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<td>Personal Mastery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delivering Results</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raising Awareness</td>
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<td>Mentoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shared Vision</td>
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gender and how people responded.

After having established that gender was not a significant determinant of a person’s ability to practicalize stewardship and take it into the mainstream as an alternative form of leadership, the next step was to see if male and female respondents were inhibited by the same factors in more or less the same way. To do this, Steps 1, 2, and 3 from the primary question were repeated and a final ranking of the dimensions on gender lines, which would serve as an indication of whether males and females were affected differently by the factors that inhibit their ability to practicalize stewardship as a form of leadership – thus answering the first subsection of the secondary question – was obtained and the result, in order of least to most inhibiting, is shown in Exhibit V.

The Age Factor
As was the case with the gender question above, the first step in responding to the age question was to determine whether or not there were significant differences between the mean responses across the dimensions for various age groups. For this purpose, the respondents were partitioned into the three age categories that provided the most equal spread possible and, at the same time, provided a clear chronological demarcation – 24 to 29 year olds, 30 to 34 year olds, and those who were 35 years and older. A single factor ANOVA was then performed on the combined mean responses for all the dimensions on each of these categories. The test was performed under the following pair of hypotheses:

\[ H_0 : \mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 \]
\[ H_1 : \text{At least two of the means differ} \]

Performed at a 95% statistical significance level, the test resulted into a p-value of 0.002358, an F-stat of 6.321118, and an F-critical of 3.061234. This low p-value led to the conclusion that there was enough statistical evidence to infer that the alternative hypothesis was true and that there were significant differences between at least two of the mean responses of the three age groups.

The next issue to address, therefore, was to determine exactly which age groups exhibited significant differences in their responses. This was accomplished by performing a Tukey and Fisher with Bonferroni adjustment LSD test. The LSD test results, with alpha (\(\alpha\)) of 0.05, returned a hurdle amount of 0.26 for the Fisher Test with the Bonferroni Adjustment and an omega (\(\omega\)) of 0.27. The result of this test was that differences existed only between the first age category (24 to 29 year olds) and the third age category (35 years and older) and between the second age category (30 to 34 year olds) and the third age category. This means that respondents who were 35 years and older responded significantly different from their younger counterparts.

Seeing that there were significant differences between the mean responses of the three age groups, the chi-squared test performed on age and any of the dimensions, as was the case with the gender question above, the next step in responding to the secondary question – was obtained; Age vs. Personal Vision, p=0.1078; Age vs. Personal Mastery, p=0.1352; Age vs. Vulnerability and Maturity, p=0.0405; Age vs. Risk Taking and Experimentation, p=0.1863; Age vs. Mentoring, p=0.225; Age vs. Raising Awareness, p=0.4336; Age vs. Shared Vision, p=0.029; Age vs. Valuing Diversity, p=0.0019; and Age vs. Delivering Results, p=0.6932. These results indicate that, though the chi-Squared test between age and the overall mean responses suggested that age had a significant influence on people’s ability to practice stewardship, only three of the nine dimensions – vulnerability and maturity (p=0.0405), Shared Vision (p=0.029), and Valuing Diversity (p=0.0019) – were affected by age.

After having established that age had an influence on a person’s ability to practicalize stewardship in general and on vulnerability and maturity, shared vision, and valuing diversity in particular, the next step was to see if individual age
categories were inhibited by the same factors in more or less the same way. To
do this, Steps 1, 2, and 3 from the primary question were replicated here in order
to obtain a final ranking of the dimensions, which would serve as an
indicator of whether the various age categories are affected similarly or
differently by the factors that inhibit their
ability to practicalize stewardship—thus
answering the second subsection of the
question. The final ranking
was, thus, obtained and the result, in order
of least to most inhibiting, is shown in
Exhibit VI.

The Hierarchy (Position) Factor
Again, the first step here was to
determine if there were significant
differences between the means responses of respondents based on their relative
positions in their organizational hierarchy. In order to do this, the reported
organizational positions were subjectively grouped into three main
categories: Senior Managers, Middle Managers, and Junior Managers. A single
factor ANOVA was then performed on the overall mean responses for all
dimensions among the three hierarchical levels to see if there were significant
differences between any two of the levels.
The test, performed at the usual 95% significance level, was conducted under the following pair of hypotheses:

\( H_0 : \mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 \)

\( H_1 : \text{At least two of the means differ} \)

The resulting p-value of 0.173395
and F-stat of 1.77462 did not provide
sufficient statistical evidence to infer that the alternative hypothesis was true.
Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted and the conclusion was that there were
no differences in the mean responses for each of the defined hierarchical levels.

The next step to answer the hierarchy
question was to determine if a person’s
position in the hierarchy of his or her organization affected his ability to
implement the dimensions of stewardship. To accomplish this, a Chi
Squared test was performed on the overall mean responses at a 95% significance level under the following pair of hypothesis:

\( H_0 : \text{The two variables are independent} \)

\( H_1 : \text{The two variables are dependent} \)

This test turned out a p-value of 0.3208
and a chi-squared stat of 6.9561,
which demonstrated that there was not
enough statistical evidence to infer
that the alternative hypothesis was true.
Therefore, the null hypothesis was
accepted and the conclusion was that
one’s position in the hierarchy did
not influence his ability to implement

stewardship concepts.

In order to be convinced that
 hierarchical position does not factor into
one’s stewardship ability in any
dimension, further chi-square analyses
for independence were performed to
measure the relationship between position and each of the nine dimensions.
Again, these tests were conducted at a
95% significance level under the
following pair of hypotheses:

\( H_0 : \text{The two variables are independent} \)

\( H_1 : \text{The two variables are dependent} \)

From these tests, the following results were obtained; Position vs. Personal Vision, \( p=0.1189 \); Position vs. Personal Mastery, \( p=0.0303 \); Position vs. Vulnerability & Maturity, \( p=0.1428 \); Position vs. Risk Taking and Experimentation, \( p=0.1074 \); Position vs. Mentoring, \( p=0.3208 \); Position vs. Raising Awareness, \( p=0.5662 \); Position vs. Shared Vision, \( p=0.6089 \); Position vs. Valuing Diversity, \( p=0.1109 \); and Position vs. Delivering Results, \( p=0.7152 \). The p-value of the test for
independence between position and
Personal Mastery, \( p=0.0303 \), provided
sufficient statistical evidence to infer
that the alternative hypothesis was true
in that instant. Therefore, the conclusion
was that though, on the average, one’s
hierarchical position did not have any
influence on his ability to implement
stewardship concept, it did have an
influence on Personal Mastery.

Having established that there was
no significant difference between the
abilities of various hierarchy levels to
implement stewardship and that one’s
position did not, on the average,
influence his stewardship abilities except
with one of the nine dimensions,
Personal Mastery, a replication of Steps
1, 2, and 3 from the primary question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>24-29 Ranking</th>
<th>30-34 Ranking</th>
<th>35+ Ranking</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerable &amp; Maturity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Personal Vision</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk Taking &amp; Experimentation</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valuing Diversity</td>
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<td>Personal Mastery</td>
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<td>Delivering Results</td>
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<td>Raising Awareness</td>
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<td>Shared Vision</td>
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The Industry Question
The initial point of contention here, as before, was whether or not there were significant differences between the abilities of persons working in different industries to implement stewardship principles. To do this, the respondents were subjectively grouped into four industry categories— the Service Sector, the Financial Sector, the Industrial Sector, and the Professional Sector. Then a single factor ANOVA was performed on the overall mean responses across the nine dimensions for these four industry sectors to see if there were any discernible differences in their responses.

The ANOVA was performed at a 95% significance level under the following pair of hypotheses:

\[ H_0 : \mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 = \mu_4 \]
\[ H_1 : \text{At least two of the means differ} \]

The results from this test were a p-value of 0.746253, an F-stat of 0.409791, and an F-critical of 2.680811. From this high p-value, there was not sufficient statistical evidence to infer that the alternative hypothesis was true. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted and the conclusion was that there was no significant difference between the abilities of persons in various industries to implement stewardship principles.

The data was then further examined to determine if a person’s industry had any influence on his stewardship abilities. To do this, a Chi-Squared test was performed between the various categories of industries and the overall mean responses for the nine dimensions. The test was performed under the following pair of hypotheses:

\[ H_0 : \text{The two variables are independent} \]
\[ H_1 : \text{The two variables are dependant} \]

The results from this test were a p-value of 0.3857, a chi-squared stat of 9.5785 and chi-squared critical of 16.919. These results led to the conclusion that there was not sufficient evidence to infer that the alternative hypothesis was true. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted that one’s employment category plays no role in his stewardship capabilities.

With the empirical establishment that industry had no influence on any of the nine dimensions, a final ranking of the dimensions along the various industries using Steps 1, 2, and 3, used to determine the final ranking from earlier sections was obtained and the result is shown in Exhibit VII.

The Question of Nationality
Here again, the first issue to be resolved was whether or not there were significant differences between the stewardship abilities of individuals based on their nationalities. The data set contained respondents primarily from the Republic of South Africa and, secondly, from the Netherlands. There was a variety, though not much, of other respondents from other parts of Europe, other parts of Africa, Asia, and the Americas. It was determined that besides South Africa and the Netherlands, other countries were not sufficiently represented to warrant their being placed in separate categories for analysis. Therefore, the data set was demarcated along two lines.
to obtain almost similar distributions - South Africans and non-South Africans. Based on this classification, a single factor ANOVA was performed on the overall mean responses of these two categories to see if they exhibited significant differences. The test was conducted at a 95% significant level under the following hypotheses:

\[ H_0 : \mu_1 = \mu_2 \]

\[ H_1 : \text{The two means differ} \]

This test returned a p-value of 0.619676, an F-stat of 0.247415, and an F-critical of 3.908258. Based on this result, the conclusion was that there was not enough statistical evidence to infer that the alternative hypothesis was true. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted and the conclusion was that nationality and stewardship were independent variables.

Furthermore, chi-square analyses for independence were used to measure the relationships between nationality and each of the nine dimensions. Again, these tests were conducted at a 95% significance level under the following pair of hypotheses:

\[ H_0 : \text{The two variables are independent} \]

\[ H_1 : \text{The two variables are dependant} \]

In order to see which factor most inhibited South Africans and non-South Africans, the usual replication of Steps 1, 2, and 3 from earlier procedures was done here. The Exhibit IX, therefore, represents the final rankings of inhibiting factors from least to most inhibiting - for South Africans and non-South Africans.

### Discussion of Results and Implications for Stakeholders

The research underpinning this article began with the quest to empirically determine factors that stunt the development of stewardship amongst contemporary leaders. In order to do this, the Stewardship Framework with nine dimensions of stewardship was introduced and the inclusion of each dimension in the framework was justified. These nine dimensions along which respondents were questioned to determine which most inhibited their implementation of the stewardship concept, as argued for by this article.

To recap, the hypothesis under which the investigation was conducted was that stewardship, as an alternative form of leadership, has not yet begun to supplant traditional forms of leadership in our organizations and communities. Based on the overall mean response of all respondents across all nine dimensions of the Stewardship Framework, which was \( \frac{2}{9} \) (rounded to the nearest whole number), and the classification that mean responses of 1 and 2 are indications of low application of stewardship, the hypothesis was answered in the affirmative. Furthermore, a t-test of this mean confirmed that this result was representative of the population, leading to the conclusion that, indeed, stewardship is not being practiced on an appreciable level.

The next quest was to determine which of the nine dimensions most inhibited contemporary leaders from practicing stewardship. The results showed that all of the respondents were generally most inhibited by the dimensions that focused on external or group factors, except for Valuing Diversity, and were generally less inhibited by the factors that were internally focused on their own abilities, except for Delivering Results. Valuing Diversity, which is an external or group-focused dimension, was

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Exhibit IX</th>
<th>Final Ranking of Dimensions by Nationality</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dimensions</td>
<td>South Africans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerability and Maturity</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Vision</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk Taking and Experimentation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valuing Diversity</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Mastery</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delivering Results</td>
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<td>Raising Awareness</td>
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<td>Mentoring</td>
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<td>Shared Vision</td>
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neither in the top third nor the bottom third of the rankings for all respondents – it was in the middle third. This means that, although people were more challenged by external or community oriented dimensions, Valuing Diversity was an exception to the general finding of externally-focused dimensions being at the bottom of the rankings. Another exception, this time more extreme, to the finding of internal dimensions being less inhibiting, was people’s ability to Deliver Results. This dimension fell in the bottom third of the rankings, along with Shared Vision and Mentoring. On the other end, the top third, Vulnerability and Maturity, Personal Mastery, and Personal Vision – in that order, were the factors that were least challenging to Respondents’ ability to implement stewardship concepts. The presence of Shared Vision in the bottom third of the rankings and Personal Vision in the top third demonstrates that contemporary leaders lack the ability to transform their personal visions into the collective vision of their organizations, thereby failing to engender the group-centered concept that is so crucial to stewardship.

Then, the investigation sought to determine if the factors that inhibited respondents were still present in similar manner along demographic lines, such as gender, age, position, industry, and nationality. The results from all of these tests were, with minor variations in the relative ranking of the dimensions, remarkably similar. It was again determined that people, irrespective of their gender, age, position, industry, or nationality, were generally more inhibited by externally-focused dimensions and generally less inhibited by internally-focused dimensions.

From the gender perspective, males and females were generally similar in their ability to practice stewardship concepts. There were no significant differences between males and females on the average across the nine dimensions. Here, again, both demographic categories, with the usual exceptions, were similarly affected by the dimensions – internally-focused dimensions at the top of the rankings and externally-focused ones at the bottom. The notable features here were that men were less inhibited, though slightly, by Risk-Taking and Experimentation than women and, more significantly, were more inhibited by Personal Mastery than women. Personal Mastery, for women, was the second least inhibiting factor and the fifth for men – an indication that women are more in-tune with their personal abilities than men are. Both men and women were least inhibited by Vulnerability and Maturity and Personal Vision and were most inhibited by Raising Awareness, Mentoring, and Shared Vision, in that order.

From the age perspective, differences were found between the abilities across each of the nine dimensions of persons older than 35 years old on the one hand, and persons younger than 35 on the other hand. Again the general pattern, with the usual exceptions, wherein internally-focused dimensions were at the top and externally-focused ones were at the bottom, was observed. Though different age categories were similarly inhibited by the dimensions, persons 35 years old and older generally were less inhibited than their younger counterparts for each of the nine dimensions, as they had higher mean responses. Again, Vulnerability and Maturity and Personal Vision were at the top of the ranking for each age category. However, where Personal Mastery was the third least inhibiting factor for people under 35 years of age, it was the fifth most inhibiting factor for persons older than 35 years. Similarly, people older than 35 were less inhibited by Risk-Taking than their younger counterparts, as this dimension fell in the top third for the older generation and in the middle third for the younger generation. Finally, with minor variations, all age categories were most inhibited by Delivering Results, Raising Awareness, and Shared Vision.

From the hierarchical point of view, all levels of the organization were affected by the dimensions in the usual pattern. Vulnerability and Maturity and Personal
Vision, in that order, were the two least inhibiting factors for all levels of the organization while Raising Awareness, Mentoring, Delivering Results and Shared Vision were the factors that most inhibited all levels of the organization. It was, however, discovered that persons in junior manager capacities were, by far, less tolerant and less capable of dealing with diversity in the workplace than persons in middle manager and senior manager capacities. For junior managers, Valuing Diversity was the second most inhibiting factor, compared to being the fifth most inhibiting factor for middle- and senior managers. Also, it was discovered that junior and senior managers were more open to Risk-Taking and experimentation than middle managers, as this dimension fell in the top third for the former two categories and in the middle third for the latter category.

From the industry angle, again no significant differences between persons working in the various industry categories were found. The general pattern of internal dimensions being less inhibiting than external ones was reflected for each of the industry categories. In fact, all categories were least inhibited by the same factors in the same order – Vulnerability and Maturity, Personal Vision, and Personal Mastery – and were most inhibited by Raising Awareness, Shared Vision, and Mentoring. However, some very interesting patterns were uncovered here. First, persons in the industrial and professional industry categories were less inclined to take risk, signifying their rigidity when it comes to established procedures in the organization, than persons in the service and financial sectors. Secondly, Delivering Results, for persons in the service sector, represented the most inhibiting factor while it was in the middle third of the rankings for each of the other industry classifications. Finally, it was found that persons in the service sector were more appreciative of the concept of Mentoring than the other categories. For the other categories, Mentoring was either the most, or the second most, inhibiting factors, while it fell in the middle third of the ranking for the service sector.

From the nationality standpoint, again it was discovered that there were no significant differences between South African and non-South Africans in their respective abilities to implement stewardship concepts. Both categories were generally less inhibited by internal factors than they were by external factors, with Vulnerability and Maturity and Personal Vision at the top and Mentoring and Shared Vision at the bottom of both rankings. The only point of interest along nationality lines is the fact that South Africans appear to be less inhibited by Delivering Results – in the middle third – than non-South Africans – the second most inhibiting factor.

Further to these tests, it was also determined that, on the average across all nine dimensions, factors like gender, position, industry, and nationality had no influence over respondents’ ability to practice or implement the concepts of stewardship. Age, on the other hand, was found to have, on the average, an impact on people’s ability to practice stewardship. A more detailed examination of the influence of these demographic factors on one’s ability to practice stewardship revealed that, though people’s gender was a non-factor in the determination of stewardship abilities, it did, in fact, have an influence on respondents’ ability to Value and Manage Diversity, albeit slightly; age, though found to be influential on the average on people’s stewardship abilities, actually had an influence on only three of the nine dimensions – Vulnerability and Maturity, Shared Vision, and Valuing Diversity; and position, also found not to be influential on the average, actually had an influence on Personal Mastery.

The implication of all of this for stakeholders is the fact that results from these tests provide a road map, so to speak, considering the limitations of the data mentioned above, by which contemporary leaders can be guided into developing their stewardship abilities. The case for stewardship as a viable and, indeed, better alternative to traditional leadership has been made by renowned leadership theorists (Greenleaf, Senge, Spears, Drucker) and is being reinforced by the research on which this article is premised. A Stewardship Framework has been offered and substantiated and our research revealed that, on the whole, people are, at best, average in their stewardship abilities and, at worst, dismal. This article, hopefully, has started the ball rolling on examining reasons why people are still archaic in their stewardship development, and has provided empirical evidence of which factors inhibit people most and whether these factors are influenced by peoples’ demography. These results could, therefore, serve as the basis of further research in the quest of making contemporary leaders more acceptable of the stewardship concept for a more liberal application.

Reference #03M-2010-02-10-01